

May 1, 2003

TO: Area Media

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

M.J. Kewley

864-467-6667

kewleym@greatergreenville.com

RE: Public Service Announcement

**10-Day Countdown of Events Set to Welcome
The Phantom of the Opera to Greenville**

Masked street banners decorate Main Street. A giant Phantom mask has been unfurled on the east wall of The Peace Center. And inside the theater, workers are assembling a reproduction of the Paris Opera House – complete with 1,000-pound chandelier, 2,700 yards of draperies and angels suspended in flight.

Downtown Greenville is undergoing a transformation. It's the first time *The Phantom of the Opera* has played in South Carolina. And to celebrate, daily activities – including a free concert with pianist Emile Pandolfi – will welcome the world-class Broadway show to the city.

Phantom brings both a cultural and economic boon to Greenville. Peace Center President Megan Riegal said The Peace Center worked hard to bring the blockbuster to the city. “*Phantom* is the most successful entertainment venture of the twentieth century, grossing more than such blockbuster films as *Titanic*, *E.T.*, and *Star Wars*. The fact that the biggest musical in Broadway history chose to make its South Carolina debut at The Peace Center is an incredible compliment to this market and the people of the Upstate.”

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Phantom

Add one

The spin-off business created by Phantom's four-week run is estimated to generate \$10 million in the local economy. During the show's 12-week run in St. Paul, Minn., the total economic impact of the event exceeded \$23 million.

The 10-Countdown will culminate with a Phantom Block Party on Friday, May 23rd, when Mayor Knox White will give the Phantom a key to the city. "We're proud to host such a quality Broadway performance," Mayor Knox White said. "It's a once-in-a-lifetime theater experience, in the heart of downtown Greenville."

The entire city is invited to welcome *The Phantom of the Opera* to the Upstate. The **10-Day Countdown to Phantom** begins Tuesday, May 13.

Tuesday, May 13: Nationally-renowned touring pianist *Emile Pandolfi* performs selected works from Andrew Lloyd Webber during a free lunch concert. The concert begins at noon in the Gunter Theater at The Peace Center for Performing Arts. Concert-goers also receive a coupon for a Phantom lunch special at Señor Wraps.

Wednesday, May 14: The East Court Grille will host *Phantom Trivia*. The trivia contest begins at 8 p.m., and the winner will receive two tickets to *Phantom of the Opera*.

Thursday, May 15: *The Phantom of the Opera* has one of the most elaborate set designs ever created, including a 10-foot, 1,000-pound chandelier that crashes to the ground during the performance. Learn how it all works during *Behind the Scenes at Phantom*, a free lunch talk with Phantom's stage manager, David Hansen. The talk begins at noon in the Peace Concert Hall, at The Peace Center. Those attending receive a Phantom lunch special coupon from 2 Chefs Restaurant.

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Phantom

Add Two

At 7 p.m. Thursday evening, Rene's Steakhouse hosts *Phantom on the Reedy*, with live music, outdoors at The Peace Center Amphitheater. Dinner reservations at Rene's Steakhouse are available by calling 467-9777.

Friday, May 16: Stop by Soby's Restaurant in downtown Greenville for *Phantom Phriday*. Beginning at 6 p.m., Soby's hosts an outdoor party on their patio. Dinner reservations are available by calling 232-7007.

Saturday, May 17: Postcard from Paris hosts an all-day *Phantom Phantasy*! Shoppers get a 10% discount all day. Register to win the Phantom Phantasy: two tickets to Phantom, the Phantom Broadway CD, a 1925 copy of Gaston Leroux's novel and a \$100 gift certificate!

Coffee Underground in downtown Greenville presents the *Phantom Philm Series*, featuring Phantom of the Opera movies beginning at 7 p.m.

In the West End, The Coliseum Restaurant hosts *The Music of the Night: An Andrew Lloyd Webber Retrospective*, with live music beginning at 8 p.m. Dinner reservations are recommended for the evening, by calling 235-9566.

Sunday, May 18: The Westin Poinsett hosts a *Phantom Sunday Brunch* featuring a special Phantom opera performance. The bunch is from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Cost is: adults \$25.95, seniors \$22.95 and children ages 6-12 \$14.95. Phone 421-9700, x 4170 for reservations.

Or, attend the *Phantom Dinner at Provencia*, at the Hyatt Regency (reservations at 235-1234). Don't miss the Sunday edition of *The Greenville News*, which features a behind-the-scenes, backstage Phantom preview.

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Phantom

Add Three

Monday, May 19: The City Council proclaims May 18-23 *Phantom Week*, and presents the proclamation to The Peace Center.

Also, the *Phantom Film Festival* continues at the Coffee Underground, with movies starting at 7 p.m.

Tuesday, May 20: Northampton Wines celebrates Phantom's French origins by hosting a *French Bordeaux Wine Tasting*, beginning at 7 p.m. Cost is \$30 per person, call 271-3919.

Also, The Cazbah in downtown Greenville hosts a *Phantom Masquerade Party*, beginning at 8 p.m.

Wednesday, May 21: *Phantom Opening Night*, at The Peace Center. Tickets are still available by calling 467-3000. Order on-line at www.peacecenter.org

Thursday, May 22: It's time for *Phantom and Phriends!* Enjoy lunch with the Phantom cast, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Barley's Taproom in downtown Greenville.

Friday, May 23: The Phantom Appears in Downtown Greenville at the *Phantom Phever Block Party!* Mayor Knox White presents the Phantom with a key to the city. Join the Phantom cast at Phantom Jazz Night, from 5:30 to 9 p.m., at the Hyatt Plaza. Volunteers from Imagine Nation Children's Museum will be on hand to assist children in making their own masks for the party.

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Phantom

Add Four

The celebration continues throughout Phantom's run in Greenville.

The Warehouse Theater offers two special Phantom Cast Performances, on Friday, May 30 and Monday, June 2. On **May 30**, after the performance of *True West*, Phantom cast member D.C. Anderson (who plays Monsieur Andre) takes the stage. A New York cabaret legend, Anderson offers a late-night performance of humor and wit. Tickets are \$15 per person.

On **June 2**, cast members from Phantom will perform *Comic Release*, an evening of contemporary Broadway and cabaret songs. Coffee and dessert reception with the actors follows the performance, which begins at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$30 per person. The box office number for tickets to the Warehouse events is 235-6849.

For a daily, recorded update of Phantom events, check the city's Phantom Phone Line at 467-5741. Questions about any of the events can be directed to 467-6667.

The Phantom Countdown is sponsored by Entercom, The Greenville News, Charter Communications, The Peace Center for the Performing Arts and the City of Greenville Parks and Recreation Department.

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PHOTO: Emile Pandolfi photo available via email

Pianist Emile Pandolfi Offers Free Lunch Concert

Contemporary pianist Emile Pandolfi will perform a tribute to Andrew Lloyd Webber on Tuesday, May 13, at the Gunter Theater in downtown Greenville.

Pandolfi, a Greenville resident, tours nationally – performing classical, Broadway and Popular music. Since 1991, he has sold more than two million CDs of his arrangements, known for their free-flowing, passionate style.

The free lunch concert begins at noon on Tuesday, May 13, at the Gunter Theater in The Peace Center for the Performing Arts. The Peace Center and the City of Greenville Parks and Recreation Department are presenting the concert to welcome Andrew Lloyd Webber's Broadway hit *Phantom of the Opera* to Greenville. From May 13 to 23, Greenville will host a 10-Day Countdown to the Phantom's appearance in downtown on Friday, May 23rd. The Pandolfi concert is the kick-off event.

Pandolfi spent his teenage years in Greenville, returning to the city to settle after living in Los Angeles. He made a living in California playing for dance, acting and opera coaches, and as the house musician at The Comedy Store in Los Angeles. There he accompanied

stand-up comedians such as Robin Williams, Jay Leno, David Letterman and Jerry Steinfeld. He also performed at the opening ceremonies of the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles. Today, Pandolfi draws on his broad experience – combining brilliant musical performance with a sense of humor and friendly personality.